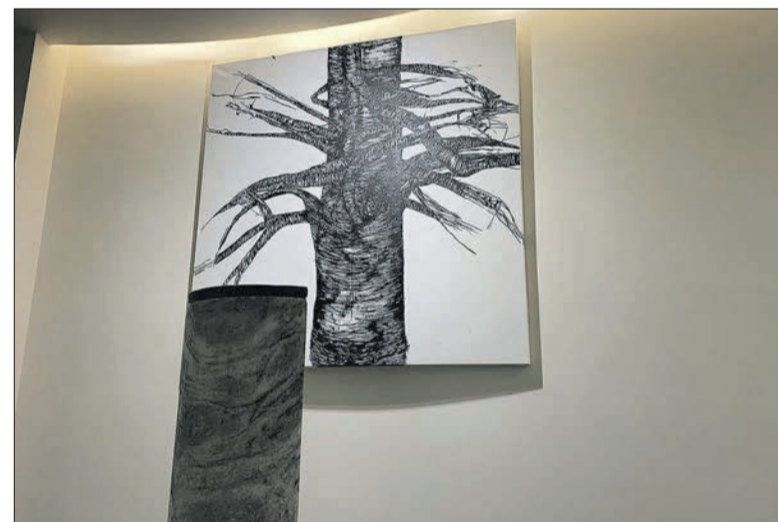
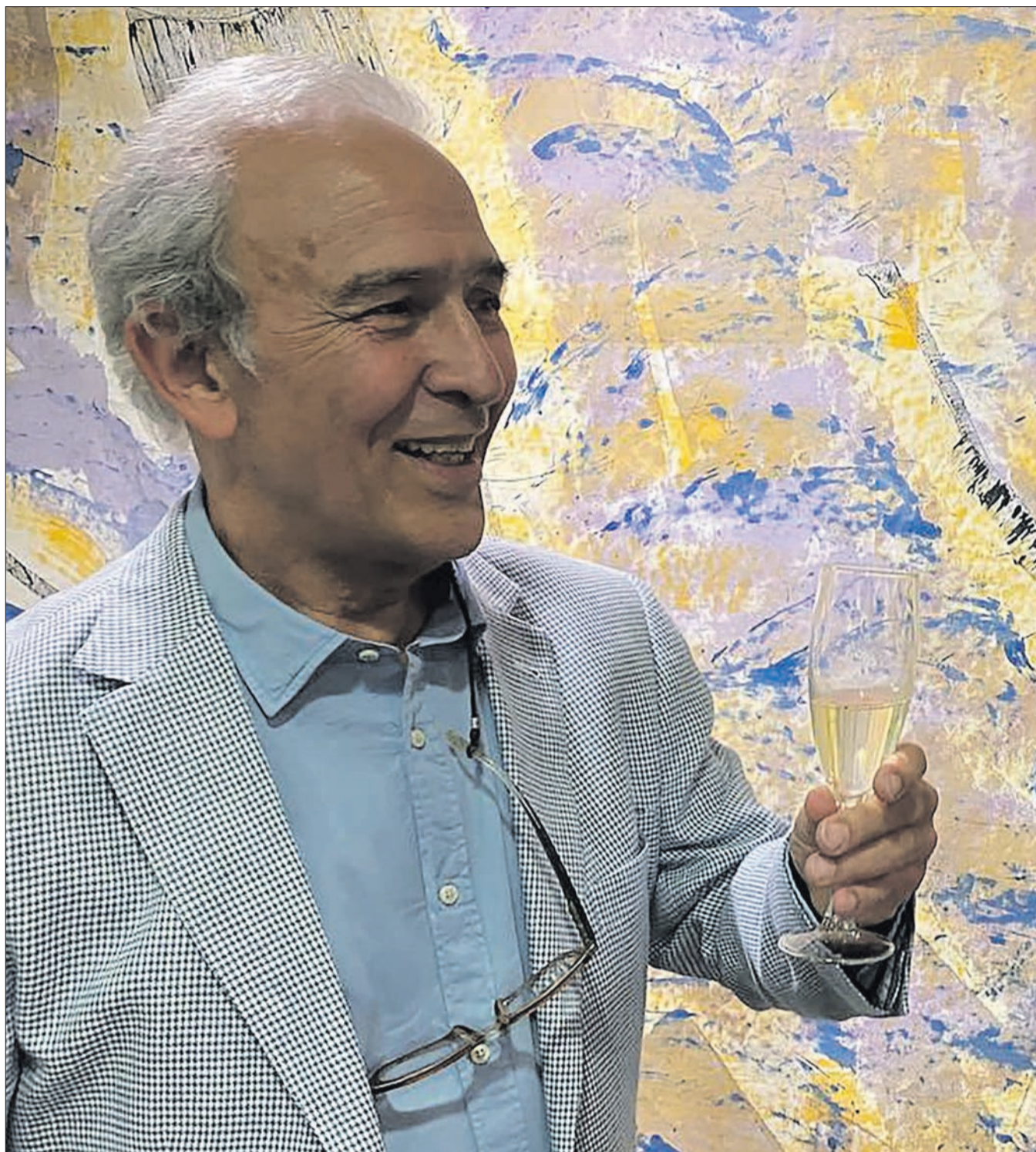


Interview ► The Embassy of Spain in Andorra Inaugurated the exhibition of Aitor de Mendizabal <<<



Aitor de Mendizabal

Sculptor, painter and engraver

«A tree is very similar to a human being»

IRINA RYBALCHENKO
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY
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The Embassy of Spain in Andorra Inaugurated the exhibition of paintings and sculptures «A tree and its forest of signs» by the artist Aitor de Mendizabal. The exhibition consists of a series of sculptures, paintings and drawings on the theme of the tree on which the artist has been working for several years. The exhibition is open to residents and tourists of Andorra until September.

Aitor de Mendizabal was born in 1949. Sculptor, painter and engraver lives and works between San Sebastian and Arcades in the Basque Country. He has a university education in the field of fine arts (Academy of Fine Arts, Rome); he

gained a postgraduate degree at the Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara (Tuscany) and studied art and museology at the International University of the Arts (Fiesole - Florence).

He has held many exhibitions in France and Spain. We can admire his public and monumental creations in San Sebastian, Hernani, Céret, Oloron, Belus or Boulogne sur mer.

We have asked the artist why the tree occupies such a prominent place in his art.

–So why a tree?

–In my art, I try to show it and apply an object, for example, a forest, or trees, all the most essential for human beings.

A tree is very similar to a human being. It grows, develops and eventually dies. But more important

than a tree is a part of a forest. Just like a human being is a part of society. And the relationship between a human being and a society and a tree and a forest is enormous.

When I was young and decided to become a creator, I expressed myself through a tree. But not only trees and forests, but I also do a lot of portraits and monuments. For me, it is fundamental to create!

–In addition to paintings, you also have sculptures. What materials do you prefer?

–I use bronze, I use marble. Marble in many ways represents Mediterranean culture - Greek, Roman and also Spanish. In Mediterranean culture, marble symbolizes the exaltation of a personage. So, I exalt a tree through

marble. And I call it the soul of a tree. A human soul is complex. And a tree is also complex. I represent the inside of a tree, a life that you cannot see from the outside.

I also have objects like the urban forest. The fact is that in the big metropolises the roots and branches of trees have been disturbed. So a person may feel disturbed, lost and alone in a metropolis.

I think lately we have gained a lot of experience through the world of art.

–For paintings, you use the Chinese technique. Why?

–Wood, fire, earth, metal, water - this is what the worldview of ancient China is based on. I use the Chinese technique in black and white. I love this contrast! I painted a big star 2

meters 15 centimeters. This is one of the examples you can see at the exhibition. Another large-scale work concerns virgin forests, for example in Siberia. But this work is in color.

–What inspires you? And what do you think of modern art?

–In modern art, there is something good and bad. Often in modern society, people don't know exactly where to go. And modern art gives us a direction and a chance to express ourselves in all areas.

For me, art is very deep. I think lately we have gained a lot of experience through the world of art. Art has become an integral part of all humanity. And I believe that art will bring many other ideas in the future. ≡

ANNUAL REPORT

The IMF is revising upwards its 4.5% growth forecast for this year

High inflation will persist through 2022 and early 2023 due to the cost of energy

Pension reform should include raising contributions and the retirement age



A. PONT

►► The central valley of Escaldes-Engordany, with the towers under construction.



Eric Jover
MINISTER OF FINANCE

«We need diversification, so we need to broaden our horizons to reduce dependence on neighboring countries»

GDP in 2040. In this sense, the body points to a set of measures that include increasing contributions, the conversion factor and retirement age. «The conclusions reaffirm that the system is unsustainable and that reforms are needed, such as those proposed by the agency», Jover said.

The work addresses the banking system of the Principality. In this sense, he considers that it needs close monitoring and greater supervision, even though Andorran banks are well-capitalized and highly liquid. However, the vulnerabilities associated with the private banking model and internationalization strategy, including over-reliance on foreign financing and large off-balance sheet assets, require close oversight. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the supervision of liquidity and increase the staffing of the AFA (Andorran Financial Authority). According to Jover, «we need to be more careful with foreign deposits and continue to work on supervision, as we lack the lender of last resort».

Finally, the IMF warns that more efforts are needed to improve statistical data and develop an anti-corruption strategy, including reform of the public procurement framework and the publication of beneficial property information. ≡

EL PERIÒDIC
ANDORRA LA VELLA
@PeriodicAND

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has revised upwards the growth forecast of 4.5% of Andorra's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for this year 2022, an increase that could be «double digits» thanks to the positive data for the first quarter, although the figure is yet to be clarified and will be known soon, Finance Minister Eric Jover and IMF Andorra's Head of Mission for Andorra Rodolphe Blavy said yesterday during the press conference for the presentation of the annual report on the Principality of this body. However, «this is a bad time to make predictions, as we are in a volatile context and for this reason we are subject to

change», said Jover.

According to the work, the forecast is that activity will return to pre-crisis levels in the second half of 2022, although the risks are significant, related to the economic impact in Europe of the war in Ukraine: the increase in the price of commodities, the unfavorable evolution of the pandemic, weaker recoveries in neighboring countries and tighter financial conditions.

With regard to inflation, the international body predicts that, as in neighboring countries, high costs will persist during 2022 and early 2023, due to still high energy prices, but should fall from early next year. «We are concerned, but with all due caution and uncertainty we believe that it will soften from 2023, although we will have to look at how

the war in Ukraine evolves; in the meantime, we will do what we can to help the people if the situation worsens», he said.

Returning to growth, the IMF believes that for this to happen, it is necessary to diversify the economy, boost investment and invest in human capital. Thus, bureaucracy and administrative rigidities, access to affordable housing and relaxation of immigration requirements must be

Despite its strengths, it considers close monitoring and greater supervision of the banking sector to be necessary

reduced, with the aim of attracting the necessary highly skilled workers. As the government and the IMF believe that the government deficit is sustainable, although it has increased as a result of the pandemic, it is necessary to bet on public and private investment, as there is room to increase the indebtedness, with the aim of betting on growth in the medium term. According to Jover, in short, «we need diversification and we need to broaden our horizons to reduce dependence on neighboring countries».

The annual report of the International Monetary Fund on Andorra also includes an analysis of pensions. We believe that a reform is essential to restore the sustainability of the system, as it will accumulate an increase in deficits of 9% of

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